

REMARKS

Upon review of the present application pursuant to receipt of the Notice of Allowance, it has been noted that in light of the Examiner's Amendment of claims 29 and 30 to depend from claim 1, claims 31 and 32 to depend from claim 9 and claims 36 and 37 to depend from claim 17, that such amended claims were identical to claims 7 and 8, claims 12 and 13, and claims 20 and 21, respectively. Accordingly, to avoid duplicative claims, the instant Amendment cancels claims 29-32 and 36-37 without prejudice or disclaimer. Since such amendments are clearly in order, applicants respectfully that the Amendment be considered and entered pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.312.

As a final matter, applicants note that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on January 21, 2004, has not been acknowledged and applicants further request return of the acknowledged citation form with the Action relating to the instant Amendment. For the Examiner's convenience, a further copy of the citation form is provided herewith.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning any aspect of this matter, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,
BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

By: Robert G. Mukai
Robert G. Mukai
Registration No. 28,531

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620

Date: February 23, 2004